

fession, must allow these four elements or classes to fight the thing out among themselves; if we undertake to aid in the fight they all, unthinkingly, turn upon us and say that we must have some object in it. They say this because it is almost impossible for any layman to appreciate the fact that anyone can do anything unless there is "something in it for himself"; they cannot do so themselves and they think no one else can! In the Los Angeles pamphlet already referred to, ex-Senator Chandler asks Senator Works the following question: "Is Mrs. Harriet W. Works, C. S., a recorded practitioner at Los Angeles, Cal., 520 Hellman Bldg., your wife?" In addition to this we would like to ask Senator Works another question—though we know he will not answer it: "Is the Church of Christ, Scientist, with headquarters in Boston, paying you anything for your public utterances against a public health bill?"

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In these days when publicity on large questions seems to be the tendency of the hour it is of great interest to the medical world to note that trend in **EXTRA-MEDICAL PROSELYTING.** so far as it affects medical affairs. Our profession and medical considerations in general have certainly not suffered from lack of the calcium ion which illuminates. Dr. Wiley, "Christian Science," the Owen bill, tuberculosis work, vivisection, etc., are very much battered subjects, and our own good Senator Works (not Senator Good Works) has had a pretty bit of notoriety thrust upon him by his tampering. All these mental pabula, however, have been served without anything to make them savory until of late there have appeared from the pen of a brilliant Frenchman, Brioux, two plays which deal with hot coals, these burning subjects being the problem of artificial abortion, and our old friend, syphilis. One play is called "Maternité," the other "Les Avariés," or as Mrs. Bernard Shaw has translated them, "Maternity," and "Damaged Goods." Rather socialistic in tone is the first, for it most cleverly tries to justify the abortionist and the victim (the patient in the play can be properly called the victim, for she dies as the result of the abortion) and leaves us tremendously uncertain in our own pious minds, as to whether our orthodox attitude has after all been a logical one. The second play deals frankly and without reserve with the subject of syphilis in its most far-reaching effects and presents besides the infected father, the infant which has inherited the disease and in turn transmitted it to the wet nurse, to say nothing of the young mother who, of course, is sacrificed.

A mere recital of the stories seems bald and unspeakable ugly, but the author has employed an artistry born of genius, and the plays are achieving a tremendous vogue abroad. Here at last we have some medical matters brought to our notice in a form more compelling to the attention than anything *Collier's Weekly* or even our own *Journal of*

*the A. M. A.* has had to offer, and since Ibsen's "Ghosts" we cannot recall anything so powerful.

The purpose of this, however, is not to impose a review or critique in these editorial columns but to think of the expediency of the arts dealing so seriously with these matters. Literature and drama in striking form presenting these problems as medicine illuminates them, it may be that through that channel and by those means the world will make the steps forward our profession works for so energetically and longs for so ardently. On the other hand the danger of the usurping of such subjects is that society will be as much misled as led, for the genius of Brioux presents truth, while on the other hand the dilettantes such as Bernard Shaw rush in with sophistries where angels fear to tread. But the greatest danger lies in the largest class of all, the panders, who write ugliness for people to read, relying on that large amount of morbidity in people which makes them visit morgues, and for the same reason devour such literature. Of such stuff is made the class of novel of which we can cite Kauffmann's "The House of Bondage" as a type. Far be it from us to settle these affairs ex cathedra, but while we watch the world and its leaders work in our domain, let us commend and admire where commendation and admiration are due, but let us protest a bit at having the ugly subjects "dished up with too much damnable iteration." H. I. W.

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Salvarsan is too good a remedy in which to lose faith, even in the least. The tendency of a number

of excellent men would seem to be to still consider this as a better remedy for syphilis than mercury and kali iodid. The

**SALVARSAN—A WARNING.** frequent repetition of the dose of salvarsan in those cases that do not respond to one, two or three doses is becoming part of the knowledge of the layman, and he is losing, to a great extent, the faith that was engendered by the extraordinary claims for the drug in the beginning. This is due greatly to his comparison between what he was led to expect and what he now believes he can expect; therefore he is inclined to put much less faith in this remedy than does his physician. It is not an uncommon thing to have the patient, for instance one in whom the lesion is of the mucous membrane, particularly on the tongue, and is persistent, or one in whom a palmar condition resists all other methods of treatment, object to receiving the injection of salvarsan. These examples are given as they are so eminently amenable to the good effects of salvarsan and are frequently absolutely resistant to other lines of treatment. The physician is thereby handicapped by this frame of mind on the part of the patient. The important point is this: A good, sensible view of salvarsan should be taken by the physician. It should be considered preeminently as a symptomatic treatment and a marvelous one, and not as a cure-all. Let us not dispense with the time-honored remedies, which are so necessary and which so frequently act far better after the use of the arsenic. G. D. C.